

**Westwood Historic Commission
Jefferson Avenue Historic Designation Hearing
Wednesday, October 12, 2011 Minutes
Municipal Complex
101 Washington Avenue**

1. Opening of the Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Beth Staples at 7:30 pm. Ms. Staples then read the Open Public Meetings Law Statement: "This meeting which conforms with the Open Public Meetings law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a regular meeting of the Westwood Historic Commission. Notices have been filed with our local official newspapers and posted on the municipal bulletin board."

2. Roll Call

Chairperson Beth Staples - present
Michael Lewis - present
Peter Von Bradsky - present
Linda Salib - present
Gregory Dietrich - present
Anne Costello - present
George Mulhauser - present
Councilmember Liaison Cindy Waneck - present

3. Jefferson Avenue Historic Designation Hearing

Chairperson Beth Staples explained the purpose of the meeting, which was to discuss the designation report for the Jefferson Avenue Historic District and to take public comment. Ms. Staples explained that the properties were not chosen by the Historic Commission but were designated as areas of historic interest by the County in their 1982-83 survey, and by the Borough in the Master Plan element adopted June 14, 2007. The Commission's function as an advisory body is to gather all the information about the historic significance of these areas, the buildings and properties. The information is put into report form and then submitted to the Mayor and Council, which is the body that actually does the adopting. Ms. Staples reiterated that the Historic Commission is strictly an advisory body that makes information available for residents if they want to restore their properties in a historically sensitive manner. She noted that the Commission advised the bank across the street on how to best preserve that building so that it retains its historic significance. The only time the Historic Commission gets involved in writing a formal report is by request from the Planning Board, if a property is on the Borough's Master Plan list.

Ms. Staples announced that the Jefferson Avenue Historic District Designation Report has been published on the Borough's website. She then asked to open the floor to the public.

4. Motion to Open to the Public: Councilmember Waneck

Second: Linda Salib

Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the Affirmative.

Mario De Luca, 77 Jefferson Avenue – wants to get a clear understanding of what the designation would mean if that building is declared a historic building. Mr. De Luca's understanding is that any alterations to the building would have to retain the look. There could be no major alterations.

Ms. Staples explained the process. If a property owner is going to perform any 'alteration, construction, restoration or demolition, upon any property located within a historic district or designated a historic landmark or historic landmark site', within 45 days the Historic Commission has to give a report to the Planning Board advising on the historic significance of the property. The Commission cannot stop the owner from altering it, or selling it if someone wants to demolish it, but it does ask the Board to work with the applicant to try ensure the work is done in a historically significant way.

Anne Costello pointed out that it only applies to the exterior of the building.

Mario De Luca – asked for confirmation that changing the aluminum siding would be permissible as long as it did not affect the structure of the building. Ms. Staples confirmed that the Commission's role in the process would be to advise the Building Department that the original siding for property was probably clapboard and cedar shakes. Information would be provided on products that simulate that look while being cost effective, in the hopes of keeping it looking more like the historic building that it is. Ms. Staples advised that historic property owners will receive a discount of up to \$500 on their permits.

Discussion was held on the history of Mr. De Luca's property. He advised that further information might be obtained from his neighbor, Mrs. Comas, whose husband had done work on the house.

Ms. Staples noted that it would be appropriate to entertain a motion regarding the designation report at this time, but that she had a concern about a missing certified mail card for 57 Jefferson Avenue. After discussion it was determined to make the motion to adopt contingent upon the receipt of the green card and no comments or objections from those or any other residents.

5. Motion to submit the Designation Report for the Jefferson Avenue Historic Streetscape to the Mayor and Council: Anne Costello

Second: Peter Von Bradsky

Roll Call:

Beth Staples - yes

Michael Lewis - yes

Peter Von Bradsky - yes

Linda Salib - yes

Anne Costello - yes

George Mulhauser – yes

Councilmember Liaison Cindy Waneck – yes. Councilmember Waneck thanked the De Luca family for coming to the hearing. She noted it is the Commission's first set of homes being designated, which is very excited to the members. She appreciates the De Luca family's interest.

Ms. Staples declared that the Jefferson Avenue Historic Streetscape Designation Report has been accepted by the Historic Commission and will be passed along to the Mayor and Council with the proviso that the Commission is waiting for the card for 57 Jefferson.

Discussion was held concerning the impact should the card not be returned. Ms. Staples said if it is not returned an attorney would have to advise the board.

Ms. Staples announced that the next streetscape to be discussed is Westwood Avenue. A request was made by Anne Costello to include Veteran's Park in this streetscape. Ms. Staples advised that the Commission is following the County's designations exactly. Veteran's Park is the next streetscape to be considered after Westwood Avenue.

- 6. Motion to adjourn:** George Mulhauser Second: Cynthia Waneck
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.
The time was 7:53 pm.